

How to Attract and Retain Workers with Disabilities

Create non-traditional recruiting strategies

Motivate current employees to recruit applicants with disabilities for existing employment opportunities.

Post job announcements on your website and consider including pictures of employees with disabilities.

Remember to identify your company as an "Equal Opportunity Employer" and add "Our Company Values Diversity."

List job openings in publications and on websites that target applicants with disabilities.

Attend local Job Fairs for job seekers with disabilities to gain a better understanding of the skills and abilities they bring to the workforce.

Establish a positive working relationship with local agencies/organizations, such as the Wisconsin Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, that provide employment assistance for job seekers with disabilities. (Search the Internet for potential contacts.)

Consider options and flexibility

Consider providing internships/work experience placements for individuals with disabilities as a means of increasing the "comfort level" of staff and the potential applicant.

Access information on reasonable accommodations and related tax incentives through local rehabilitation agencies/organizations.

Consider telecommuting, job sharing, and other alternative employment options.

Explore accommodations (i.e. interpreters, readers, large print) when interviewing and testing applicants with disabilities.

Consider "outside the box" approaches

Explore modifications to existing work-stations/procedures to reduce injuries, enhance productivity, and accommodate workers with disabilities.

Consider mentoring partnerships as a way to make workers with disabilities feel at home.

Consider greater use of "cafeteria" style benefit packages to facilitate the hiring of persons with disabilities in flexible work arrangements.

Promote opportunities for workers with disabilities to update their skills

Ensure that workers with disabilities receive the same access to employer-provided training as their co-workers.

Encourage workers with disabilities to stay competitive via training in the increasingly technology-based economy.

Review company programs to address multiple learning styles. Avoid one-size-fits-all approaches.

Combat negative stereotypes

Offer management level training and employee workshops to eliminate disability related bias in the workplace.

Ensure that disability bias plays no part in hiring, training, or retention decisions.

Finally -

*Look at the skills
the person brings to the job,
not the disability...*